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CIA Leader Denies U.S.-Iran Entanglement

By Michael Salster
Of The Dispatch Staff

The director of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency flatly denied Thursday any American activity in Iranian internal affairs.

Adm. Stansfield Turner, in Columbus for an address at Ohio State University, also said the agency is not cooperating with Iranian secret police in reprisals against Iranian students in the United States protesting the shah of Iran's policies.

During a 30-minute press conference, Turner discussed a number of issues, including recruitment of college students for the CIA, the agency's reorganization efforts and the court suit against author Frank Snepp.

Turner said he is gratified by the response of students to CIA recruiting efforts.

The students, he said, have seen "through the complaints of a vocal minority" in choosing employment with the agency.

Turner said about one in 10 students interviewed by the CIA is employed in either research, scientific intelligence, administration, or overseas clandestine activities.

The reorganization, undertaken after Turner succeeded William Colby as director, has resulted in the elimination of 820 jobs in the agency, Turner said.

The resulting increase in agency efficiency "means that our people in the field will be less fettered by overdirection," Turner said.

He said the reorganization will also improve morale among younger agency employees, giving them opportunities "by moving along the older people."

Turner had harsh words for former CIA employee Frank Snepp, who recently published a book entitled *Decent Interval*, about American activities during the fall of South

Vietnam in 1975, without first getting CIA clearance.

"I don't respect that kind of deception and violation of contract," Turner said, referring to an agreement each CIA employee signs that all writings will be screened before publication.

The federal government has filed suit against Snepp. Turner said that if Snepp and others want to "blow the whistle" on government activities, there are other avenues open besides the CIA screening procedure.

"In the last several years there have been created oversight committees," Turner said. "The Snepps can go to these people (and) register their desire to publish... if they think we will be unfair."

"I've yet to find a so-called whistle blower who has taken this recourse."

Turner's visits to college campuses recently have been marred by demonstrations by members of the Iranian Student Association.

The director said the only time the CIA becomes involved in a country's internal affairs, and that for a "political action," is at the direction of the National Security Council and the president, and then only after the appropriate congressional committees have been notified.

Turner closed the press conference by saying that he has "not seen or heard anything" that would warrant an investigation into possible CIA connections to Watergate.

"There is no evidence to come to my attention (indicating) there should be an investigation," he said.

Recent books by former members of the Nixon administration have indicated the CIA was partly responsible for some of the information leaks that eventually forced Nixon to resign.

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